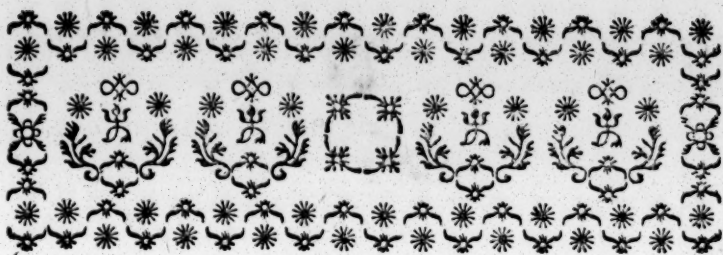


THE
SPLENDID SHILLING,
AN
IMITATION
OF
MILTON.

BY
Mr. PHILIPS.

L O N D O N:
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T H E

SPLENDID SHILLING,

———Sing, heavenly muse, ———
*Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme,
A Shilling, Breeches, and Chimeras-dire.*

HAPPY the man, who void of cares and strife,
In silken, or in leathern purse retains
A Splendid Shilling: he nor hears with pain
New oysters cry'd, nor sighs for chearful ale;
But with his friends, when nightly-mills arise,
To Juniper's-Magpye, or Town-Hall * repairs:
Where, mindful of the nymph, whose wanton eye
Transfix'd his soul, and kindled amorous flames,
Chloe, or Phillis; he each circling glafs
Wisheth her health, and joy, and equal love.
Mean while, he smoaks, and laughs at merry tale,
Or Pun ambiguous, or Conundrum quaint.
But I, whom griping penury furrounds,
And hunger, sure attendant upon want,
With scanty offals, and small acid tiff
(Wretched repast!) my meagre corps sustain;
Then solitary walk, or doze at home
In garret vile, and with a warming puff

* *Two noted Ale-houses in Oxford.*

Regale chill'd fingers ; or from tube as black
 As winter-chimney, or well-polish'd jet,
 Exhale Mundungus, ill-perfuming scent :
 Not blacker tube, nor of a shorter size
 Smoaks Cambro-Briton (vers'd in pedigree,
 Sprung from Cadwalader and Arthur, kings
 Full famous in romantick tale) when he
 O'er many a craggy hill and barren cliff,
 Upon a cargo of fam'd Cestrian cheese,
 High over-shadowing rides, with a design
 To vend his wares, or at th' Arvonian mart,
 Or Maridunum, or the antient town
 Yclip'd Brechina, or where Vaga's stream
 Encircles Ariconium, fruitful soil !
 Whence flow nectareous wines, that well may vie
 With Massic, Setin, or renown'd Falern.

Thus, while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
 With looks demure, and silent pace, a Dun,
 Horrible monster ! hated by gods and men,
 To my aerial citadel ascends,
 With vocal heel thrice thund'ring at my gate,
 With hideous accent thrice he calls, I know
 The voice ill-boding, and the solemn sound.
 What shou'd I do ? or whither turn ? amaz'd,
 Confounded, to the dark recess I fly
 Of woodhole ; strait my bristling hairs erect
 Thro' sudden fear ; a chilly sweat bedews
 My shud'ring limbs, and (wonderful to tell !)
 My tongue forgets her faculty of speech ;
 So horrible he seems ! his faded brow
 Entrench'd with many a frown, and conic beard,
 And spreading band, admir'd by modern saints,
 Disastrous acts forebode ; in his right hand
 Long scrolls of paper solemnly he waves,
 With characters, and figures dire inscrib'd,

Grievous to mortal eyes ; (ye gods avert
 Such plagues from righteous men ;) behind him stalks
 Another monster not unlike himself,
 Sullen of aspect, by the vulgar call'd
 A Catchpole, whose polluted hands the gods
 With force incredible, and magick charms
 Erst have endu'd, if he his ample palm
 Should haply on ill-fated shoulder lay
 Of debtor, strait his body, to the touch
 Obsequious, (as whilom knights were wont)
 To some enchanted castle is convey'd,
 Where gates impregnable, and coercive chains
 In durance strict detain him, till in form
 Of money, Pallas sets the captive free.

Beware, ye debtors, when ye walk beware,
 Be circumspect ; oft with insidious ken
 This caitiff eyes your steps aloof, and oft
 Lies perdué in a nook or gloomy cave,
 Prompt to inchant some inadvertent wretch
 With his unhallowed touch. So (poets sing)
 Grimalkin to domestick vermin sworn
 An everlasting foe, with watchful eye
 Lies nightly brooding o'er a chinky gap,
 Protending her fell claws, to thoughtless mice
 Sure ruin. So her disembowell'd web
 Arachne in a hall, or kitchen spreads,
 Obvious to vagrant flies : she secret stands
 Within her woven cell ; the humming prey,
 Regardless of their fate, rush on the toils
 Inextricable, nor will aught avail
 Their arts, or arms, or shapes of lovely hue ;
 The wasp insidious, and the buzzing drone,
 And butterfly proud of expanded wings
 Distinct with gold, entangled in her snares,
 Useless resistance make : with eager strides,

She tow'ring flies to her expected spoils ;
 Then, with envenom'd jaws the vital blood
 Drinks of reluctant foes, and to her cave
 Their bulky carcases triumphant drags.

So pass my days. But when nocturnal shades
 This world envelop, and th' inclement air
 Persuades men to repel benumbing frosts
 With pleasant wines, and crackling blaze of wood ;
 Me, lonely sitting, nor the glimmering light
 Of make-weight candle, nor the joyous talk
 Of loving friend delights ; distress'd, forlorn,
 Amidst the horrors of the tedious night,
 Darkling I sigh, and feed with dismal thoughts
 My anxious mind ; or sometimes mournful verse
 Indite, and sing of groves and myrtle shades,
 Or desperate lady near a purling stream,
 Or lover pendent on a willow-tree.

Mean while I labour with eternal drought,
 And restless wish, and rave ; my parched throat
 Finds no relief, nor heavy eyes repose :
 But if a slumber haply does invade
 My weary limbs, my fancy's still awake,
 Thoughtful of drink, and eager, in a dream,
 Tipples imaginary pots of ale,
 In vain ; awake I find the settled thirst
 Still gnawing, and the pleasant phantom curse.

Thus do I live from pleasure quite debar'd,
 Nor taste the fruits that the suns genial rays
 Mature, John-Apple, nor the downy Peach,
 Nor Walnut in rough furrow'd coat secure,
 Nor Medlar-fruit, delicious in decay :

Afflictions great ! yet greater still remain :
 My Galligaskins that have long withstood
 The winter's fury, and encroaching frosts,
 By time subdu'd, (what will not time subdue !)

An horrid chasm disclose, with orifice
 Wide, discontinuous ; at which the winds
 Eurus and Auster, and the dreadful force
 Of Boreas, that congeals the Cronian waves,
 Tumultuous enter with dire chilling blasts,
 Portending agues. Thus a well-fraught Ship
 Long sail'd secure, or thro' th' Ægean deep,
 Or the Ionian, till cruising near
 The Lilybean shore, with hideous crush
 On Scylla, or Charibdis (dang'rous rocks)
 She strikes rebounding, whence the shatter'd oak,
 So fierce a shock unable to withstand,
 Admits the sea, in at the gaping side
 The crowding waves gush with impetuous rage,
 Resistless, overwhelming ; horrors seize
 The mariners, death in their eyes appears.
 They stare, they lave, they pump, they swear, they pray:
 (Vain efforts !) still the battering waves rush in,
 Implacable, till delug'd by the foam,
 The ship sinks found'ring in the vast abyss.



F I N I S.

6 JU 62.

